

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A goods sales management system ~~having, comprising:~~
a plurality of goods-vending machines ~~provided with, each of the vending machines having~~
a container for storing a plurality of goods, ~~respectively; [[,]]~~ and
a vending machine management apparatus for controlling the plurality of goods-vending
machines, the vending machine management apparatus being ~~connected to~~ associated with each of
the plurality of goods vending machines ~~via a communication line,~~
wherein said vending machine management apparatus comprises time information
transmitting means for transmitting time ~~managed by itself as~~ time information to each of the
plurality of goods-vending machines,
wherein each of said goods-vending machines ~~comprising~~ comprises:
time adjustment management means for managing time as time information and
making the managed time coincide with said time information managed by and transmitted from
the vending machine management apparatus;
goods delivering means for delivering the goods from the container; ~~[[,]]~~
delivered-goods number counting means for counting ~~an actual~~ a number of the
goods delivered by said goods delivering means; ~~[[,]]~~
goods number setting means for setting a maximum number of ~~the~~ goods storable in
the container ~~in accordance with~~ according to a capacity of the container; ~~[[,]]~~ and
information transmitting/receiving means for transmitting a request for restocking
the goods to said vending machine management apparatus when a number obtained by subtracting
the number counted by said delivered-goods number counting means from the number set by said
goods number setting means is less than a predetermined number of remaining goods,

wherein said ~~goods-vending machine transmits said time information managed by itself as~~
well as said request for restocking the goods to said vending machine management apparatus-
~~through said information transmitting/receiving means,~~

wherein said vending machine management apparatus transmits said time information
managed thereby to said goods vending machine as a transmitter of said request for restocking the
goods by said time information transmitting means when ~~receiving~~ said request for restocking the
goods is received, ~~[[and]]~~

wherein said time adjustment management means of said ~~goods-vending machine makes~~
said time managed ~~by itself~~ coincide with said time information transmitted from said vending
machine management apparatus, and

wherein the predetermined number is determined based on a predicted time that a product
will be sold out, the predetermined number being determined to allow a restocking to occur before
the product will be sold out.

2. (Currently Amended) The goods sales management system according to claim 1, said
vending machine management apparatus further comprising~~[[:]]~~ response means for transmitting a
response signal when receiving the request for restocking the goods,-

~~wherein said goods-vending machine receives the response signal from said response means,~~
~~after transmitting said request for restocking the goods, then cuts off the communication line with~~
~~said vending machine management apparatus.~~

3. (Currently Amended) The goods sales management system according to claim 1, wherein
said plurality of containers of said ~~goods-vending machines are structured to be capable of each~~
contains separately containing a plurality of kinds of goods in each container, and

wherein each of said ~~goods-vending machines further comprising~~ comprises a sales
management unit for delivering the goods by said goods delivering means in accordance with a

selecting operation of desired kinds of goods by a customer after receiving paid money a payment.

4. (Currently Amended) A goods sales management method, using a goods sales management system having a plurality of ~~goods-vending machines~~, each vending machine provided with a container for storing a plurality of goods, ~~respectively~~, and a vending machine management apparatus ~~connected to~~ associated with each of the plurality of ~~goods-vending machines~~ ~~via a communication line for controlling to control~~ the plurality of ~~goods-vending machines~~, in which sales information of the goods in the plurality of goods vending machines is managed, said method comprising ~~the steps of~~:

setting a maximum number of the goods storable in said container of said ~~goods-vending~~ machine in accordance with a capacity of the container;[[,]]

transmitting a request for restocking the goods and time information managed by said ~~goods-vending~~ machine to said vending machine management apparatus when a number obtained by subtracting an actual number of the goods delivered by the ~~goods-vending~~ machine from the maximum number of the goods set in the ~~goods-vending~~ machine is less than a predetermined number of remaining goods;[[,]]

transmitting time information managed by said vending machine management apparatus to the goods vending machine as a transmitter of said request for restocking the goods when receiving said request for restocking the goods;[[,]] and

making said time information managed by said ~~goods-vending~~ machine coincide with the time information transmitted from said vending machine management apparatus,

wherein the predetermined number is determined based on a predicted time that a product will be sold out, the predetermined number being determined to allow a restocking to occur before the product will be sold out.

5. (Currently Amended) The goods sales management system according to claim 2, wherein

~~said containers of said goods-vending machines are structured to be capable of separately containing~~ contain a plurality of kinds of goods in each container, and
wherein each of said ~~goods-vending machines further comprising~~ comprises a sales management unit for delivering the goods by said goods delivering means in accordance with a selecting operation of a desired kinds of goods good by a customer after ~~receiving paid money~~ a payment is complete.

6. (New) The goods sales management system according to claim 1, wherein the vending machine management apparatus is associated with each of the plurality of vending machines through a communication line.

7. (New) A vending machine management system, comprising a plurality of vending machines associated with a vending machine management apparatus,

wherein each of the plurality of vending machines computes a number of a product delivered by that vending machine and, when the number of the product delivered by a vending machine is less than a predetermined number for that product, the vending machine transmits a restocking request to the vending machine management apparatus, and

wherein the predetermined number is determined based on a predicted time that a product will be sold out from the vending machine, the predetermined number being determined to allow a restocking to occur before the product will be sold out.

8. (New) The vending machine management system according to claim 7, further comprising a vending machine time management unit provided in each of the plurality of vending machines, the vending machine time management units being configured to manage time information.

9. (New) The goods sales management system according to claim 1, wherein said vending machine management apparatus predicts a time when a stockout may occur.
10. (New) The goods sales management system according to claim 9, wherein said vending machine management apparatus calculates the time when the stockout may occur based on sales conditions of the goods and the predetermined number of goods remaining.
11. (New) The goods sales management system according to claim 10, wherein the sales condition of the goods comprises a length of time between a current restocking request and a next restocking request.
12. (New) The goods sales management system according to claim 9, wherein said vending machine management apparatus calculates the time when the stockout may occur based on a time period when the number obtained by subtracting the number counted by said delivered-goods number counting means from the number set by said goods number setting means is less than the predetermined number of remaining goods.
13. (New) The goods sales management system according to claim 1, wherein the predetermined number of remaining goods is dynamically calculated.
14. (New) The goods sales management method according to claim 4, further comprising dynamically calculating the predetermined number of remaining goods.
15. (New) The vending machine management system according to claim 7, wherein the predetermined number of remaining goods is dynamically calculated.

16. (New) The goods sales management system according to claim 2, wherein said vending machine receives the response signal from said response means, after transmitting said request for restocking the goods, then cuts off communications with said vending machine management apparatus.

17. (New) The vending machine management system according to claim 8, further comprising a time adjustment unit provided in the vending machine management apparatus configured to manage vending system time information for the vending management system.

18. (New) The vending machine management system according to claim 17, wherein a respective one of the plurality of vending machines transmits respective time information as well as the restocking request to said vending machine management apparatus.

19. (New) The vending machine management system according to claim 18, wherein said vending machine management apparatus transmits said vending system time information managed to said respective vending machine transmitting said restocking request when said restocking request is received.

20. (New) The vending machine management system according to claim 19, wherein said vending machine time management unit makes said vending system time information coincide with said vending system time information transmitted from said vending machine management apparatus.